



## Weekly Drought Brief Monday, July 21, 2014

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### **CURRENT CONDITIONS**

**Fire Activity:** CAL FIRE has responded to 3,348 wildfires across the state since January 1, burning 36,763 acres. This year's fire activity is well above the year-to-date average of 2,449 wildfires on 30,088 acres. CAL FIRE responded to over 190 new wildfires last week, including the Bully Fire in Shasta County, which has burned a total of 11,700 acres.

**Reservoir Levels (% capacity):** [Reservoir Levels](#) as of July 17 remain low, including: Don Pedro 47%; Exchequer 23%; Folsom Lake 44%; Lake Oroville 38%; Millerton Lake 56%; New Melones 28%; Pine Flat 23%; San Luis 26%; Lake Shasta 37%; and Trinity Lake 39%. An update of water levels at [other smaller reservoirs](#) is also available.

**Vulnerable Water Systems:** The State Water Board's Drinking Water Program is providing technical and funding assistance to several communities facing drinking water shortages, and is monitoring water systems across the state to determine if new support is needed. This week, over \$8.4 million has been identified for specific emergency drinking water projects out of \$15 million appropriated in March for this purpose. Updated information can be found at the [CDPH Drinking Water Program](#) website during the three (3) month transition period. For more information regarding the transfer, please visit the [State Water Board's Drinking Water](#) website.

**Recent precipitation:** Thunderstorms developed across the Sierra and southern Cascades over the weekend, resulting in some precipitation. Precipitation amounts widely varied across California with many areas experiencing less than 0.25" of rain, however, there were some scattered amounts averaging between 0.5" and 0.8". Precipitation totals (in inches) from Friday, July 18 through Monday, July 21:

- **Bloods Creek:** 1.39" in the last week.
- **Cascade-Sierra:** 0.50" - 1.00" in the last week.
- **Cherry Valley Weather Station:** 1.93" in the last week.
- **Central Coast:** 0.10" in the last week.
- **Fresno County:** 0.50" - 1.00" in the last week.
- **Hetch Hetchy:** 1.32" in the last week.
- **Inyo County:** 0.10" - 0.20" in the last week.
- **Lake Tahoe Area:** 0.10" - 0.50" in the last week.
- **Mono County:** 0.10" - 0.20" in the last week.
- **Sacramento Valley:** 0.10" in the last week.
- **San Joaquín Valley:** 0.10" in the last week.
- **South Coast:** 0.10" in the last week.
- **Stanislaus Meadow:** 2.24" in the last week.
- **Woodfords:** 1.60" in the last week.
- **San Francisco:** No precipitation reported.

## **KEY ACTION ITEMS FROM THIS WEEK**

- **Lady Gaga Calls on Californians to Help Save our Water:** International pop superstar and five-time Grammy winner [Lady Gaga has released a Public Service Announcement \(PSA\)](#) asking Californians to join the effort and take extraordinary measures to save water during the drought. The PSA is available on [SaveOurWater.com](#), a new site designed to help Californians find ways to conserve at home and at work every day.
- **State Water Board Adopts Emergency Regulations to Reduce Urban Outdoor Water Use:** The Water Board adopted statewide [emergency water conservation regulations](#) on Tuesday, July 15, which establishes individual temporary prohibitions like lawn-watering that causes runoff, hosing down driveways and using decorative fountains that don't recirculate water. Violations may be punishable by fines of up to \$500. The emergency regulations also require all water suppliers to file monthly reports on water use and production, and to implement water shortage contingency plans to a level where outdoor irrigation restrictions are mandatory. It is anticipated that the regulations will go into effect by Friday, August 1.

Last month, water agencies serving California's cities and towns [provided updates](#) to the Water Board on current water consumption. These updates, combined with a statewide survey of water agencies' conservation actions, have informed the Water Board's proposed emergency water conservation regulations. Also, the Governor's April [Proclamation of Continued Emergency Drought](#) called on residents to limit outdoor irrigation and prevent wasteful water practices, and directed water agencies to prevent water waste.

- **ACWA's Tim Quinn Discusses New State Regulations on PBS News Hour:** The recent mandatory water restrictions put in place by the state were the topic of an [interview](#) on Wednesday, July 16 by Judy Woodruff during the PBS News Hour of Timothy Quinn, ACWA Executive Director and Craig Miller of KQED.
- **Emergency Curtailment Regulations and Enforcement:** The proposed [emergency curtailment regulations](#) adopted on Wednesday, July 2, were approved by the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) on Thursday, July 18. These regulations enable the Water Board to [issue curtailments](#) to additional junior water right holders on a real-time basis. The Water Board staff will continue to inspect surface water diversions in all watersheds where curtailment notices have been issued.

The Water Board is currently evaluating flows on the main stem of the Eel River and may lift the curtailment notices put in place several weeks ago due to recent increased bypasses from PG&E's operations. Curtailment notices on the North Fork off the Eel River will remain in place and curtailment orders may be issued to water right holders on the Middle Fork of the Eel River in the coming 1-2 weeks.

- **The UC Davis Study's Preliminary Results Show Drought Impacts in the Central Valley:** The UC Davis (UCD), Center for Watershed Sciences, released its updated estimates of the drought's economic effects on agriculture and the Central Valley the National Press Club on Tuesday, July 15. The study shows that an additional 428,000 acres may be fallowed, as many as 17,100 seasonal and part-time jobs lost and an economic cost of approximately \$2.2 billion. [Watch the briefing at the UCD Center for Watershed Sciences website.](#)
- **The Central Valley, Particularly the Tulare Basin, will be Hardest Hit:** The Central Valley is hardest hit, particularly the Tulare Basin, with projected losses of \$810 million, or 2.3 percent,

in crop revenue; \$203 million in dairy and livestock value; and \$453 million in additional well-pumping costs. For an [overview of the UCD drought study assessment](#) visit the California Department of Food & Agriculture webpage.

- **Emergency Food Aid, Rental and Utility Assistance:** The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided to date over 131,400 boxes of food to community food banks in drought-impacted counties. Approximately 93,600 boxes of food have been picked up by 48,162 households. By this Friday, July 25, an additional 13,200 will be delivered to six counties. Local food banks are targeting this food aid to residents most impacted by the drought.

The non-profit group La Cooperativa continues to distribute the \$10 million state-funded emergency rental assistance to impacted families and individuals across counties most impacted by the drought. As of Thursday, July 10, the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has reported that a total of \$641,706 is committed; and \$348,017 in funds has been issued to 410 applicants in 18 counties.

The Department of Community Services and Development (CSD) has created a \$600,000 program to help families pay their water bills. This program targets families in 10 counties that are experiencing “exceptional” drought.

- **Deadline Nearing to Apply for \$200 million in Drought Grants:** Water agencies have until Monday, July 21, to submit applications to the State Department of Water Resources for \$200 million in [Integrated Regional Water Management](#) (IRWM) grants that has been expedited by emergency drought legislation passed in March.
- **San Jose's New High-Tech Water Purification Plant to Expand Recycled Water Use:** Silicon Valley water officials on Friday, July 18, [took a big step toward expanding the use of recycled water](#) when they cut the ribbon at a \$72 million high-tech water plant in Alviso. The plant will produce billions of gallons of highly purified water for Santa Clara County over the next decade.
- **San Diego Invests in Local Water Storage:** On Wednesday, July 16, regional officials in San Diego County completed the biggest local water storage project in its history by raising the San Vicente Dam. The \$838 million expansion more than doubled the dam's capacity to 242,000 acre-feet. An acre-foot of water can provide supplies for two families for a year. The reservoir is designed to store surplus water during wet years for use during drought or other supply interruptions.
- **Water Saving Tips Promoted Across the State:** The state's newly improved water conservation website, [SaveOurWater.com](#), is promoting the “Don't Waste Summer” campaign. This campaign provides a new conservation tip each day for the 100 days of summer. Supporters can sign up for daily email tips, and share Save Our Water's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) feeds for this public awareness campaign.
- **Save Our Water Does Double Duty at State Fair, Hosts Exhibits Featuring Indoor and Outdoor Water Saving Tips:** The drought is on and so is the California State Fair. This year, the [Save Our Water campaign](#) is doubling down its messaging on conservation by hosting two exhibits at the fair – one on indoor water conservation and the other on outdoor conservation. [Visit the State Fair](#) to see first-hand what you can do in and around your home.

- **Open Burn Ban in Affect across the State:** Open burning continues to be prohibited on 31 million acres of land across the state due to the [burn ban that CAL FIRE](#) has directed through the coordination of its unit chiefs. This ban on open burning in state responsibility areas (outside of cities and towns) reduces wildfire danger amidst extremely dry conditions.
- **Drought Response Funding:** \$687 million in state drought funding that was appropriated in March through emergency legislation continues to advance toward meeting critical needs. Over \$61 million of this funding addresses emergency water needs, food aid and housing assistance to drought-impacted communities. Nearly \$21 million of those funds are already in communities providing assistance and additional funds are being readied as drought impacts worsen. Nearly \$625 million of the emergency funds appropriated in March came from sources dedicated to capital improvements to water systems. Since March, state agencies have expedited grant approvals, getting over \$21 million immediately allocated to grantees that were pre-approved for certain projects. As planned in March, the next \$200 million of expedited capital funding will be awarded this fall, with the remaining \$250 million granted by mid next-year. State government has also appropriated tens of millions in funding to CAL FIRE over its typical budget to enable staffing-up fire crews much earlier this fire season.
- **Governor's Drought Task Force:** The Taskforce continues to meet daily to take actions that conserve water and coordinate state response to the drought.

### **Local Government**

- **Local Emergency Proclamations:** A total of 51 local Emergency Proclamations have been received to date from city, county, and tribal governments, as well as special districts:
  - **21 Counties:** Glenn, Inyo, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Santa Barbara, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Sutter, Tulare, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
  - **12 Cities:** Brooktrails Township (Mendocino County), City of Willits (Mendocino County), City of St. Helena (Napa County), City of Calistoga (Napa County), City of American Canyon (Napa County), City of Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara County), City of Montague (Siskiyou County), City of Live Oak (Sutter County), City of San Juan Bautista (San Benito County), City of Lodi (San Joaquin County), City of Ripon (San Joaquin County), and City of Rio Dell (Humboldt County).
  - **7 Tribes:** Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County), Yurok Tribe (Humboldt County), Tule River Indian Tribe (Tulare County), Karuk Tribe (Siskiyou/Humboldt Counties), Sherwood Valley Pomo Indian Tribe (Mendocino County), Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation (Yolo County), and Cortina Indian Rancheria (Colusa County).
  - **11 Special Districts:** Lake Don Pedro Community Services District (Stanislaus County), Placer County Water Agency (Placer County), Twain Harte Community Services District (Tuolumne County), Carpinteria Valley Water District (Santa Barbara County), Meiners Oaks Water District (Ventura County), Mariposa Public Utility District (Mariposa County), Goleta Water District (Santa Barbara County), Montecito Water District (Santa Barbara County), Tuolumne Utilities District (Tuolumne County), Mountain House Community Service District (San Joaquin County), Nevada Irrigation District (Nevada County).

- **Water Agency Conservation Efforts:** The Association of California Water Agencies (AWCA) [has identified](#) several hundred local water agencies that have implemented water conservation actions. These water agencies [are responding to the drought](#) by implementing conservation programs, which include voluntary calls for reduced water usage and mandatory restrictions where water shortages are worst.
- **County Drought Taskforces:** A total of 26 counties have established drought task forces to coordinate local drought response. These counties include: Butte, Kern, Kings, Lake, Madera, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Napa.
- **Tribal Taskforce:** One tribe has established a drought task force to coordinate tribal drought response. This tribe includes: Hoopa Valley Tribe (Humboldt County).

#### **DROUGHT RELATED WEBSITES FOR MORE INFORMATION**

##### **[Drought.CA.Gov](#): California's Drought Information Clearinghouse**

State's Water Conservation Campaign, [Save our Water](#)  
Local Government, [Drought Clearinghouse and Toolkit](#)

California Department of Food and Agriculture, [Drought information](#)  
California Department of Water Resources, [Current Water Conditions](#)  
California Data Exchange Center, [Snow Pack/Water Levels](#)  
California State Water Resources Control Board, Water Rights, [Drought Info and Actions](#)  
California Natural Resources Agency, [Drought Info and Actions](#)  
State Water Resources Control Board, Drinking Water, [SWRCB Drinking Water Program](#)  
California State Water Project, [Information](#)

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) for current conditions throughout the region  
[U.S. Drought Portal](#), National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS)  
National Weather Service [Climate Predictor Center](#)  
USDA Drought Designations by County [CA County Designations](#)  
USDA Disaster and Drought Assistance Information [USDA Programs](#)  
U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Assistance Office: [www.sba.gov/disaster](http://www.sba.gov/disaster)